

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing one or more real-time marketing opportunities
5 to one or more third parties during a sales transaction between a customer and a seller for purchasing a product, the real-time marketing opportunity being offered by the seller, the method comprising:
establishing a communication connection between the seller and the one or more
third parties;
10 issuing an alert over the established connection to the one or more third parties that the sales transaction is in progress and a bidding process is open for soliciting one or more bids on at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities;
establishing a time duration for the bidding process associated with the at least
15 one real-time marketing opportunity; and
receiving the one or more bids from the one or more third parties for the at least one real-time marketing opportunity.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
20 issuing an end-of-bidding alert to the one or more third parties that a winning bid has been received; and
completing the transaction between the seller and the customer for the product including the at least one marketing opportunity.
- 25 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of: a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

4. The method of claim 2, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

5

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of establishing a communication connection further includes:

offering general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities on an Internet site associated with the seller, and

10 allowing the one or more third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of establishing a communication connection further includes:

15 offering general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities via a telephone conversation with the seller; and

allowing the one or more third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

20 7. An apparatus for providing one or more real-time marketing opportunities to one or more third parties during a sales transaction between a customer and a seller for purchasing a product, the real-time marketing opportunity being offered by the seller, the apparatus comprising:

a network; and

25 a processor coupled to the network, the processor configured to:

establish a communication connection between the seller and the one or more third parties over the network;

issue an alert over the established connection to the one or more third parties that the sales transaction is in progress and a bidding process is open for

bidding on at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities;
establish a time duration for the bidding process associated with the at least one real-time marketing opportunity; and
5 receive one or more bids from the one or more third parties for the at least one real-time marketing opportunity.

8. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the processor is further configured to:
10 issue an end-of-bidding alert to the one or more third parties that a winning bid has been received; and
complete the transaction between the seller and the customer for the product including the at least one marketing opportunity.

15 9. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

20 10. The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

25 11. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the processor in establishing a communication connection is further configured to:
offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities on an Internet site associated with the seller; and
allow the one or more third parties to establish a communication connection

with the seller over the Internet site.

12. The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the processor in establishing a communication connection is further configured to:

5 offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities via a telephone conversation with the seller; and
allow the one or more third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

10 13. An article of manufacture for providing one or more real-time marketing opportunities to one or more third parties during a sales transaction between a customer and a seller for purchasing a product, the real-time marketing opportunity being offered by the seller, the article of manufacture comprising:

a computer readable medium; and
15 instructions carried on the computer readable medium, the instructions readable by a processor, the instructions for causing a processor to:
establish a communication connection between the seller and the one or more third parties over a network;
issue an alert over the established connection to the one or more third
20 parties that the sales transaction is in progress and a bidding process is open for bidding on at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities;
establish a time duration for the bidding process associated with the at least one real-time marketing opportunity; and
25 receive one or more bids from the one or more third parties for the at least one real-time marketing opportunity.

14. The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the instruction further cause the processor to:

issue an end-of-bidding alert to the one or more third parties that a winning bid has been received; and
complete the transaction between the seller and the customer for the product including the at least one marketing opportunity.

5

15. The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

10

16. The article of manufacture of claim 14, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

15

17. The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the instructions in causing the processor to establish a communication connection further cause the processor to:

offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities on an Internet site associated with the seller; and
allow the one or more third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

18. The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the instructions in causing the processor to establish a communication connection further cause the processor to:

offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities via a telephone conversation with the seller; and
allow the one or more third parties to establish a communication connection

with the seller over the Internet site.